



*Exhibition of New Paintings and Sculpture
from April 5 through April 23, 1949*

THE ARTIST SPEAKS

in paint, stone, and words...

THE DOWNTOWN GALLERY

32 East Fifty-first Street

New York

ATB
1949

CATALOGUE

RAYMOND BREININ . . 1. ALONG A PEACEFUL SEA Oil

"A picture is an unexpected window looking out upon an integrated world in which there exist recognizable objects transmuted by the impact of familiar and nostalgic moods, bounded only by the limits of my power to project pictorially through the stubborn medium of paint that which is so deeply rooted in my heart and mind. This painting is not a unit distinct in itself, but rather an evolving fragment — crystallized in its present form upon the cornice of my imagination."

WILLIAM BRICE 2. CHALK HILL Oil

"If one is simply truthful, and can express himself in the language of art, he will be forced to come to a way of projecting his ideas in a manner personal to himself, yet using every consideration at his command offered him through the development of art to his time.

"In this painting the identity of the individual object is lost and reborn in a more universal pattern. The forms and voids are not necessarily seen at a given moment under certain atmospheric conditions, but in a total timeless world. The artist does not serve the object — rather, it serves him in stating his truth."

PAUL BURLIN 3. IMPATIENCE AMONG THE INANIMATES Oil

"Truth in art is an abstract idea. You are not copying anything, you are inventing. My point of departure is a step by step organization of shape and color into a unity of design. And these shapes and colors are like floats on a limitless space because I preoccupy myself with making them exist in a two-dimensional world — not in a world of perspective, but in an infinity of space."

RALSTON CRAWFORD 4. KEWALO CLOSEUP Oil

"*Kewalo Closeup* is based on a series of direct and indirect stimuli that came into focus in relation to objects perceived in nature. The picture has an autonomous character, so Kewalo becomes unimportant to the observer. This painting represents my interest in finding and expressing (these matters are for me inseparable) a bit of order."

JOHN MARIN 14. SEA AND FIGURES IN UMBER AND RED Oil

"The good picture —
No one wonders at more than the one who created it.
Made . . . with an inborn instinct . . . in which time begets an awareness . . .
and these periods of awareness are . . . The . . . red letter . . . days in the
Creator's life.

Made . . . by an instinctive recognition of the . . . Basic . . . the great
horizontal . . . the culmination of rest. The great upright . . . the culmination of
activity . . . for all things sway away from or toward these two . . . A recognition of
the backbones . . . as it were . . . of movement . . . all objects within the picture
obeying the magnetic pull of these backbones . . .

Having not . . . these backbones of movement . . . in the mind's eye . . .
there can be no real creation.

Having . . . one goes not far astray . . . pulled back by an awareness of
these . . ."

GEORGE L. K. MORRIS . 15. ARIZONA ALTAR Oil

"The basis for *Arizona Altar* was the interior of a Spanish Mission (San
Xavier du Bac) near Tuscon. Upon entering the church the sudden transition
from sharp sunlight outside results in an astonishing moment of disarray. For
this initial glance the eye is incapable of coordinating the countless fragments
of curtain, candle, cherub, bastard baroque, and Indian textures which surround
the puppet figure of the Saint. The mind would seem to put up a design of its
own, as though in defense, at once more broken and more unified than actuality."

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE . . 16. BROOKLYN BRIDGE Oil

"This is the Brooklyn Bridge to me."

BEN SHAHN 17. NOCTURNE Tempera

"I'll say this much: that art is my particular form of speech, and whatever
I feel about men who sing and play guitars, I've said in the present picture.
I feel myself in the desperate position of one who, having just presented a long,
painstaking, carefully worked out harangue on a subject dear to his heart, is
confronted with the request: 'Will you now give us seventy-five words on what
you've just said?'"

CHARLES SHEELER . . . 18. VARIATIONS IN RED Oil

"The source of my work in general is the visual world. I try to arrive
at an organization of forms, which represents my equivalent of the organization
I see around me in Nature. There I stop without trying to give expression to any
hidden or underlying meaning.

"Having no theories I respond to those things which give me a pleasurable
reaction, in themselves and in their relation to other things, and I attempt to
set them down in a visual design. The result may range from an association of
irrelevancies to a combination of forms closely interrelated in function or habit."

STUART DAVIS 5. PAD NO. 4 Oil

"In the past, Art as a thing-in-itself was a speculation. In our time it is a fact in practice. Growing awareness that the volition to Art is the complete negation of the affective emotions in common experience made this possible.

"*Pad No. 4* is one example of the isolate, Art. Its purity consists of the perversity of its elements in being meaningless, thus effecting the complete neutralization of the emotional context of the given Subject-Logic. Through this technique the negation becomes positive in the dynamics of the total configuration of the non-rational C-ratios. The product is Art, period.

"Abstract? You call it your way, and let me call it my way. In any case it is an art that doesn't have to point at things to be understood. It is also worth recalling that it is the only Art that can be called contemporary, in the proper sense of the term."

DAVID FREDENTHAL . . 6. SCIENCE FOR THE CITIZEN Watercolor

"I am involved in Mankind', therefore I paint the human condition. My esthetic is based on and conditioned by whatever traditions and explorations aid the formation of images necessary to this end. In this picture can be seen the destruction of human life and love. It has to do with my fears, and everyone's fears, of the atomic bomb and its threat to society. Its title is a comment on the emphasis war is given in atomic research. The horrible phenomenon of a burning man, I observed in the Pacific where Japanese were routed from holes by flame-throwers."

LOUIS GUGLIELMI . . . 7. CITYSCAPE WITH FIGURES Oil

"This painting is descriptive, and the painter comments on things seen in a manner suggested by the material and translated to a plastic idea. It is not a neurotic mirror held to a disordered world; rather it is an attempt at an organic ordered unity. It is composed with dimensional color-planes and long shapes of varying proportions. Linear movement balances the stresses and relates the spaces. The form, the soundness of structure, the invention, and the metamorphosis is the artist's statement in the affirmative."

BERNARD KARFIOL . . 8. DOWN TO THE SEA Oil

"A painting should be seen through the innate feeling eye rather than the literary scientific mind. Whatever the style, whether its aesthetic qualities be in color or handling of pigment, it lives only through its depth or degree of intensity.

"For me, Nature in all its elements provides the essentials. In this painting, I was motivated by a mood of joyfulness; the contrast of shapes — figures against landscape, trees against sky, light against dark, movements and counter-movements, all fusing into a living entity. The subject-matter is a vehicle of expression, not an end in itself."

YASUO KUNIYOSHI . . 9. CARNIVAL Oil

"I paint differently today than I did five years ago because I can express myself more clearly, but in a real sense I have not changed. I practice my art and pursue my ideal because of a strong conviction that I owe my being as a painter to our society. Regardless of the direction in which my work moves, I always attempt to reflect our time from its most humanistic point of view. In *Carnival* I portray the emotional duplicity of our period. In a world of festive 'dead-pan' the grimness of the reality is heightened by the color of unreality."

JACOB LAWRENCE . . 10. THE WEDDING Tempera

"For me the most important function of art is observation. My long term approach is an effort to develop the insight and personal philosophy I bring to my observation. I tried to do this in *The Wedding*. I conceived the idea on the spot and in my handling of the problem established the atmosphere of tradition by a formal handling of the design. The pageantry is suggested by emphasizing and enriching the color, and by exaggerating the elements present at the wedding which was my original take-off point."

WESLEY LEA 11. MYSTIC FAMILY Oil

"My main interest is in figure painting. With this theme I employ the figure with natural elements. I like to think of the figure as being part of the elements and part of nature. I enjoy working them together to present a cosmic order, a philosophical comment on the old theme, man and nature. This material offers natural contrasts for organizing a composition. I use color to condition the various parts of the composition; this rather than the traditional method of playing one color area against another."

JULIAN LEVI 12. NETS Oil

"*Nets* uses terrain and objects with which I am closely identified — the sea-coast. While I have drawn exclusively on data of nature, extensive re-arrangement of figurative elements has been made so that the real purpose of this picture is served — evocation of mood. The illusionist conception of deep space is abandoned, replaced by a more arbitrary animation of the picture area. The design is based on reposeful, undulating, horizontal movements, given measure by a series of vertical subdivisions, festooned with arabesques which are the nets of the title."

JACK LEVINE 13. CORONATION OF KING OF GREECE . Oil

"The Greek State is another outpost of Democracy 'menaced' by the working people and their desire for peace.

"As a dramatic ensemble, the grouping of the figures may suggest icons and mosaics of the Near Eastern churches. The style, or manner, is at first open and improvisational, then curbed by heavy umber lines. Color which effloresces in the painting's early stages is finally disintegrated by a harsh gray, inducing a mood of grimness and melancholy."

MITCHELL SIPORIN . . 19. DANCERS BY THE CLOCK Oil

"Nature is not only that to which we travel in the appropriate season. It is to be found also in the loneliest corner, curiously alive because we are in it. People, the events they move in, the emotional and intellectual climate around and within them — these are the materials of my work.

"This picture is a synthesis of automatic invention and controlled arrangement, prismatic planes and objects moving in, out and around, like dancers on a floor. The scene is festive, the sense is not. The intent is poetic paradox, a juxtaposition of gaiety and gloom, one jostling the other."

NILES SPENCER 20. THE SILVER TANKS Oil

"Although my original motif stems from a direct visual reaction to a group of oil tanks, the painting itself is both *more* or *less* than that observation. *Less*, in that it is the process of a deliberate limiting of the color scheme and simplification of the shapes, for there is that unavoidable choice that must be made from countless other combinations from this particular subject. *More*, in that by the selected ordering of the chosen elements of form and color the picture should contain emotional reactions that are not bound by one literal scene. Memory and associations should intensify the color and design into a new logic."

REUBEN TAM 21. NORTHERN TERRAIN Oil

"Like several other paintings of mine, this was inspired by the geology and climate of Maine in the late summer, when one encounters the long reaches of the season over the granite land. My aim was to present, both directly and suggestively, the relationship of morain, bedrock, and atmospheric change. To accomplish this, I have emphasized the larger and more conclusive geological shapes of the earth, in a kind of space that conveys a feeling of time and vastness, instead of local description."

KARL ZERBE 22. JOB Encaustic

"*Job* is the story of progressive thought in any society. It is a drama of faith, without which we could not go on.

"The theme of this painting has been in my mind for many years. The miasma arising from humanity after the Second World War — that pathetic mixture of hope, doubt, and despair, finally brought it to the point of concrete outward expression.

"Shapes, textures, and colors are used to get the emotional impact across. Some of this is deliberate, some unconscious; the border is hard to define. The painting is an intermixture of physiological reaction and philosophic credo."

WILLIAM ZORACH . . 23. BLACK CAT Porphyritic Diabase

"Technical facility, novel ingenious device, and decorative linear arabesque may be momentarily entertaining and intriguing, permitting the enthusiast to read esoteric meanings. But what is more important for the artist is to express with clarity, simplicity, and power, those living spiritual qualities of humanity that will have value to human beings for all time.

"In this carving I have tried to express in one of the most permanent materials that animate quality of affection as well as the fantasy and brooding mysterious depth that has always been meaningful to me in this lovable domesticated animal."